

ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

A Perspective on Soviet Claims of Action-Reaction

FROM:

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National Intelligence Officer
for Strategic Programs

EXTENSION

DATE

21 December 1982

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

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COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

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THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

SP - 193/82
21 December 1982
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MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

THROUGH: Chairman, National Intelligence Council

FROM: National Intelligence Officer for Strategic Programs

SUBJECT: A Perspective on Soviet Claims of Action-Reaction

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1. Yesterday, in a speech commemorating the 60th anniversary of the USSR, CPSU General Secretary Andropov said:

"No programs of a further arms build-up will ever force the Soviet Union to make unilateral concessions. We will be compelled to counter the challenge of the American side by deploying weapons systems of our own--an analogous missile to counter the MX missile, and our own long-range cruise missile, which we are now testing, to counter the US long-range cruise missile.... Hence, if the people in Washington really believe that new weapons systems will be a "trump" for the Americans at negotiations, we want them to know that these trumps are false."

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2. Although there was a new element in the speech--the fact of cruise missile testing--the message is an old theme but one that the Soviets have been pushing very hard lately: the US initiates all aspects of the arms race while the Soviets only respond. This message will continue to be hammered away by the Soviet propaganda machine and is particularly aimed at the uninformed, which includes those who are most vigorous in seeking relaxations of East-West tensions and reductions in nuclear arms. Unfortunately, the uninformed are particularly susceptible to how the Soviets portray their own weapon developments; the uninformed generally pay much more attention to the more visible US programs, which they feel capable of influencing, and have little knowledge of Soviet programs in development and no power to influence them.

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3. The Soviets are especially adept at playing their own secrecy, with which they hide their programs from the world until it serves their interests to reveal them, against the openness of the US weapons development process. This asymmetry serves them well in appearing to be the good guys, and in supporting campaigns against US weapon programs. They are aided in this process by US practices which limit official announcements about Soviet programs in order to protect intelligence sources and methods.

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4. In an era of arms control negotiations the Soviets are able to take advantage of pressure on the US from those who are insufficiently informed. Many believe that the US is responsible for the arms race and the Soviets want it to stop, but that the Soviets are reluctantly forced to react to US provocative weapon developments.

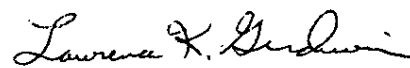
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5. At the present time, the US has three ballistic missiles in development, the MX, the Pershing II, and the Trident D-5. The Soviets apparently have counterparts to each of these in development. They also have about ten other new and modernized ballistic missiles in development. Obviously, if they could stop the US programs by halting their "counterpart" systems, the net result would be continued Soviet strategic improvement. It is also obvious that we will continue to hear about only their counterpart systems developed in "reaction," and not about the majority of their strategic program development effort. Attached is a more detailed discussion of Soviet secrecy and their strategic weapon programs.

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6. The Soviets will continue to play this theme of US action and Soviet reaction for all they can get. I think it is likely to be very effective in the treatment of strategic arms issues in both the US and European media, particularly since many people are looking for reasons now to believe that if we reduce defense spending, the Soviets will slow down as a result. It would be timely for the US to initiate a comprehensive effort to counter effectively this Soviet campaign without damaging intelligence sources and methods.

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Lawrence K. Gershwin

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Attachment to:

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SECURITY AND SOVIET STRATEGIC WEAPON PROGRAMS

Secrecy

1. In the USSR, the very existence of weapon systems, not to mention their technical and operational details, are closely held state secrets. The decisionmaking process for a new system takes place in a closed circle of intimates, headed by the General Secretary. There is no public debate regarding the efficacy or funding of the system. There is a detailed and focused cover concealment and deception effort underway to protect their programs from exposure to our collection means. Those in the USSR with access to weapons programs in development are often denied the right to emigrate for ten years (or longer) after termination of their sensitive employment. There is strict compartmentation within the defense industry. Subcontractors for a program often have little or no details about the overall program. In one case, a man designing a component for an SLBM guidance system did not know if his component was for a missile or a space vehicle.

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2. The Soviets credit the secrecy of their weapons programs as an important advantage in the strategic competition:

"Achievement of quantitative and qualitative superiority over an adversary usually requires lengthy production efforts. At the same time creation of a basically new weapon, secretly nurtured in scientific research institutes and design bureaus, can abruptly change the relation between forces within a short period of time."

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3. The Soviets are especially adept at playing their secrecy against the openness of the US weapons development process and this asymmetry serves them well:

--They mount propaganda campaigns designed to impede approval of funding for US programs.

--With their open access to development schedules and often technical and operational details of our future weapons, they can (and do) program appropriate countermeasures and offsetting systems to appear when our systems appear.

--They can familiarize their troops with US systems long before those systems appear. In one monthly magazine there is a regular feature which describes Western weapon systems in development, test and being deployed. Only our most sensitive sources and methods can give us bits and pieces of counterpart Soviet systems.

--They quietly and effectively use arms control negotiating to further their own programs while impeding ours.

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4. At the present time, the US has three ballistic missiles in development, the MX, the Pershing II, and the Trident D-5. The Soviets apparently have counterparts to each of these in development. They also have about ten other new and modernized ballistic missiles in development. Obviously, if they could stop the US programs by halting their "counterpart" systems, the net result would be continued Soviet strategic improvement. It is also obvious that we will continue to hear about only their counterpart systems developed in "reaction," and not about the majority of their strategic program development effort. There are also some details about the so-called Soviet reaction programs that the Soviets will be reluctant to acknowledge.

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Response to MX

5. The Soviets have begun telling the world that they will deploy a new missile in response to MX. In October the Soviets conducted the first test (a failure) of what is probably an MX class missile. It was tested before MX, will begin deployment before MX and has been in development since the early 1970s. In a further display of chutzpah, Ambassador Dobrynin, when he announced the test of this new type to the State Department back in October, asked that we respect the confidentiality of his announcement. Up to this time the Soviet Union has not seen fit to announce to the world, or to its own people, that it has flight tested this new missile.

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Response to P-II

6. In 1980 the Soviet line was that the SS-20, which began testing in 1974 and began deployment in 1977, was a response to the Pershing II, which had its first test in 1982. The Soviets said they were reacting to a 1969 \$50,000 Martin Marietta contract for a concept study on future Pershing work. The Soviets have since backed off that line and refer to the SS-20 as a simple modernization to aging SS-4s and SS-5s which have been deployed for more than 20 years.

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7. They haven't announced yet what their "response" to Pershing II is now, but I feel that it could be a missile now in development for a 1983 test, probably an SS-20 variant with a single RV to make it appear "analogous" to the P-II. If I'm right, the Soviets will try to shift the INF negotiations away from SS-20 vs. P-II and GLCM to a trade between this "new" system and the US P-II and GLCM.

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Response to Trident D-5

8. The Soviets in 1980, as part of their peace offensive offered to ban future improvements to missiles aboard Typhoon and Ohio class SSBNs. This offer would halt development of both the D-5 and an improvement to the SS-NX-20. To the uninformed this would seem to be a reasonable gesture to help slow down the "arms race". The Soviets are getting a lot of propaganda mileage out of this.

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9. The Soviets have an unannounced follow-on to the SS-NX-20 in development that will have a 14-RV variant and a single RV, probably MaRVed

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variant. Since the Soviets refer to the SS-NX-20/Typhoon weapon system as a counterpart to the current Trident SSBN with the C-4 missile, system, they are setting up a claim that the SS-NX-20 follow-on is a "response" to the C-4 follow-on, the D-5 missile. The final D-5 configuration has not been decided upon yet, and the Navy is aiming toward a 1987 first flight, with initial deployment on Trident SSBNs in 1989. The Soviet Navy had a requirement for the "counterpart" SS-NX-20 follow-on in 1978, the Politburo decided upon the program in 1980 and the system is scheduled to become operational in 1988.

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10. They have underway two additional programs for substantial improvements to their liquid propellant SLBMs. The first, which will be tested soon, will probably have range/throw weight characteristics similar to the Trident C-4. The second will be deployed in the late 1980s and may have capabilities similar to the D-5. They do not appear anxious to let anyone know about these important programs, since these cannot be touted as a "response" to US programs.

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Response to Long Range Cruise Missiles (LRCM)

11. Yesterday Andropov made the first public announcement that the Soviets had a long range cruise missile in development. What he failed to mention was that they have five variants of two basic LRCM airframes in development. Three of these variants are based on a development program that started in the early 1970s, well before a US decision was reached in 1977 to proceed with cruise missile deployments. The Soviets were successful in keeping this program secret for about ten years, with only some very limited intelligence information available to us until the last two years, and no knowledge in the rest of the world about the programs existence.

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